



2014

Gun Sense Voter Federal Candidate Questionnaire

**10 QUESTIONS AMERICA'S VOTERS
DESERVE ANSWERS TO**

About this Questionnaire

Every day, 86 Americans die by gunfire. That's why the Gun Sense Voter Project is asking all federal candidates to complete this brief questionnaire. We are working to support candidates who will vote for common-sense laws to reduce gun violence. Using this questionnaire and the candidate's past history on gun issues, we will make determinations that will help Gun Sense Voters decide where candidates stand. Opposing a gun safety policy in this questionnaire will not necessarily be considered a statement against gun sense—that's why we ask candidates to explain their positions if they choose.

For submission instructions, please contact: gunsenseinfo@everytown.org.

About Gun Sense Voter

Gun Sense Voter is a non-partisan, grassroots movement of moms, mayors, gun owners, survivors of gun violence, law enforcement officers, veterans, faith leaders, and more.

Gun Sense Voter is a project of Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Together Everytown and Moms Demand Action form the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country, with more than 2 million supporters who are fighting for laws that improve public safety while respecting the Second Amendment. Learn more at www.everytown.org and follow us @Everytown.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, _____ a candidate for the office of
_____ in _____ *

certify that the answers in this questionnaire represent my own views.

SIGNATURE

DATE

* Include state and district name, if applicable

STAFF NAME

STAFF PHONE

STAFF EMAIL

1

Do you agree: we can *both* do more to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people and protect the rights of responsible, law-abiding people?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION

2 Background Checks & Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Dangerous People

Under federal law, anyone who buys a gun from a federally licensed dealer must pass a criminal background check, but the same person can end-run this requirement by buying a gun from an unlicensed seller, including from a stranger that the buyer met online or at a gun show. This loophole enables felons, domestic abusers, and other prohibited purchasers to buy guns with no questions asked. In the states that require background checks on all handgun sales, there are 38% fewer women shot to death by their intimate partners and 39% fewer law enforcement officers killed with handguns.¹ Do you support requiring background checks for all gun sales (with reasonable exceptions such as for transfers between close family members and temporary transfers for hunting and self-defense)?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION



3 Background Checks & Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Dangerous People

Federal law prohibits anyone from having firearms if they have been convicted of abusing their spouses, or if they are the subjects of active restraining orders taken out by their spouses, but not if they have been convicted of stalking or have been convicted of abusing their dating partners. The share of intimate partner violence that occurs in dating relationships has been steadily growing—and as of 2008, more domestic violence homicides were committed by dating partners than by spouses.² Do you support a law that would prohibit gun possession by convicted stalkers and people convicted of—or, who after due process, are actively restrained from—abusing a dating partner?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION

4 Background Checks & Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Dangerous People

Currently, federal law requires licensed gun dealers to conduct criminal background checks on all prospective gun buyers. Because websites that facilitate gun sales are not held to similar standards, unlicensed high-volume sellers use these sites to sell guns to a vast market of anonymous buyers without background checks—making it easy for felons and other dangerous people to buy guns from strangers they meet online with no questions asked. In fact, an estimated 25,000 guns are transferred to criminals with prohibiting records each year on one website alone, Armslist.com.³ This double standard makes it easy for prohibited people to get guns, and it gives unlicensed high-volume sellers who use websites like Armslist an unfair advantage over licensed gun dealers. Do you support legislation that would level the playing field by treating sites like Armslist as licensed gun brokers, and require a background check every time someone buys a gun through one of these sites?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION



5 Background Checks & Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Dangerous People

The National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) is missing hundreds of thousands of records that would block dangerous people, including those with severe mental illness, from passing background checks when they try to buy guns. States are responsible for sending these records to NICS, but vary widely in their performance. Do you support an increase in congressional funding for the federal grant programs that help states submit their records?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION

6 Gun Trafficking, Straw Purchasing, and Stolen Guns

People listed on the federal government's terror watch lists are prohibited from boarding airplanes—but current federal law does not bar them from buying guns or explosives. Indeed, according to a report by the Government Accountability Office, people on terror watch lists bought firearms or explosives from licensed dealers 1,321 times between 2004 and 2010.⁴ Do you support legislation—drafted by the George W. Bush administration—that would close this “terror gap” by giving the FBI the discretion to block these people from buying guns?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION



7 Gun Trafficking, Straw Purchasing, and Stolen Guns

Under current law, it is difficult to prosecute and convict people suspected of trafficking illegal guns because the penalties for trafficking are small and violations are difficult to prove. In fact, the current penalty for gun trafficking is the same as for trafficking chickens across state lines.⁵ Do you support legislation that would create a strong federal gun trafficking statute with serious penalties?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION

8 High Capacity Magazines

In many mass shootings, including the 2011 shooting of U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in Tucson, AZ, bystanders have been able to subdue perpetrators of mass shootings when the shooters stop to reload. Research from Virginia showed that the federal limit on high-capacity magazines in effect from 1994 to 2004 led to a 50% reduction in criminals being armed with high-capacity magazines—and when the law expired, the share of crime guns with such magazines doubled.⁶ Several states have enacted limits on the size of ammunition magazines. Do you support limits on the capacity of ammunition magazines?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION



9 Child Safety

Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia have child access prevention laws, which allow criminal charges for adult gun owners who fail to store their guns safely and keep them out of the reach of children. Do you support laws that allow a prosecutor to bring charges if a gun owner stores a firearm negligently, a minor accesses the gun, and harm results?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION

10 National Concealed Carry Mandate

Historically, states have set their own laws for who may carry a concealed gun and where they may carry it in public. Many states require applicants to be trained in gun safety and do not grant concealed carry permits to teenagers or people who have recently been convicted of assault, battery, or stalking offenses—while other states have weaker standards and will allow individuals like these to carry in public. Some in Congress have proposed “national concealed carry reciprocity” legislation, which would create a new federal mandate forcing every state to recognize concealed carry permits from every other state, no matter how lax a state’s laws are. Do you oppose national concealed carry reciprocity, which would overturn state public safety laws and replace them with a lowest-common denominator standard?

YES

NO

OPTIONAL EXPLANATION



Endnotes

1. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Report, 2011, available at <http://bit.ly/V1GvFe> (excludes New York due to incomplete data); Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Supplementary Homicide Report, 2010.
2. U.S. Department of Justice, Homicide Trends in the United States 1980-2008, available at <http://1.usa.gov/1uARYtW>. Percentages are based on the 63% of homicides for which victim/offender relationship was known.
3. Felon Seeks Firearm: a Report by Mayors Against Illegal Guns, September 18, 2013, available at <http://everytown.org/article/felon-seeks-firearm/>.
4. Government Accountability Office, Terrorist Watchlist Screening, May 5, 2010, available at <http://1.usa.gov/1iqqTYs>.
5. 18 U.S.C. 924(a)(1); 18 U.S.C. 2317.
6. David Fallis & James Grimaldi, "VA data show drop in criminal firepower during assault gun ban," Washington Post, January 23, 2011, available at <http://wapo.st/ToGb69l>.

